



By the King.

A Proclamation for restraint of killing, dressing, and eating of Fleish  
in Lent, or on Fish-dayes, appointed by the Law, to be hereafter  
*strictly obserued by all sorts of people.*



Hereas diuers good Lawes and Statutes, haue heretofore, with great care and prouidence been made and enacted for the due obseruati-  
on of Lent, and other dayes appointed for Fish-dayes, aswell for the  
sparing & increase of Fleish victuall, as for the maintenance of the Ma-  
nie and shipping of this Realme, by the encouragement of Fishermen  
to goe to the Seas for the taking of Fish, which Lawes and politique  
Constitutions, haue from time to time been seconded and quickned by  
sundry Proclamations, and other Actes and Ordinances of State in  
the time of Our Royall Predecessors; And whereas, notwithstanding  
so many good prouisions heretofore had and made in that kinde, wee  
haue obserued, that the inordinate liberty vsually taken by all sorts of people, to kill, dresse and eat  
Fleish in the Lent season, and on other dayes and times prohibited, is become so inueterate an euil,  
that it will require more then ordinary care to suppress the same.

Wee therefore, much affecting the reformation of so great and growing an euil, which is so great  
an enemy to the plenty of this Our Kingdom, and so great a discouragement to Fishermen, who  
would be the best Seminary of Mariners, haue thought fit to expresse Our Selfe, & Our Royall  
Commandement in this behalfe, in such a plaine and cleare way, that there may from henceforth  
be no pretence of excuse to any, wherof, without future declaration of Our pleasure in this kinde,  
wee shall expect, and doe require from all Our Subjects, that due notice bee taken, and that a  
strict and continued obedience and conformity bee yeelded thereunto, both for the present, and in all  
succeeding times.

And therefore we doe straitly charge and command all and euery person and persons whatso-  
euer, to whom it may appertaine, carefully to prouide and see, that these Orders following may be  
duely obserued and put in execution, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such penalties as by  
the Lawes of this Our Realme may be inflicted vpon the Offenders, for their contempt or neg-  
lect of Us and Our Lawes, whereof we shall shew Our Selfe most sensible.

And first, whereas we find, that the chiefest cause of these disorders hath growen from the Li-  
cences that haue been granted to Butchers to kill and bitter Fleish contrary to Law, and that by  
Our Lawes, no Maior, Justice of Peace, or other person of what degree or quality soeuer, can  
grant any Licence in this kinde; And that the Lords, and others of Our Priny Councell, doe by  
Our direction forbear to grant the same, or giue way therevnto; Our will and pleasure is, vpon  
the penalties prouided by Law, and such further punishment to be inflicted vpon the offenders, as  
shall be thought meete, that no such Licence shall bee granted for the killing or bittering of Fleish;  
And, that no Butcher, or other person whatsoever, doe by colour thereof, kill, bitter, or put to sale  
any Fleish contrary to the Lawes establisshed and prouided in that behalfe.

And for the auoiding of such inconueniences hereafter, Our will and pleasure is, that the Lord  
Maior of Our Citie of London, and euery other Officer and Justice of Peace, shal call before them,  
and send for any of the seruants of any Inholders, Victuallers, Cooks, Alehousekeepers, Tauer-  
ners, and keepers of Ordinary tables, & such others that bitter Victuals, & to examine them vpon  
their corporall Oathes, what Fleish is, or hath been during the Lent season, or other dayes prohi-  
bited by the Law, dressed, killed, bittered, or eaten in their houses, which if they shall refuse to doe,  
then to commit to prison the said seruants so refusing vpon their Oathes to declare the trueth.



That the Lord Mayor of London shall also yearly before Lent, or at the beginning thereof, cause all Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehouse keepers, and Taverners within the sayd Citie and Liberties thereof, to appeare before him, or such persons as he shall appoynt meete for that purpose; And shall take Recognizances with sufficient Sureties of euery of them in good summes of money, (Viz.) One hundred pounds of the Principall, and their sureties thirty pounds apiece, to Our vse, that the Butchers shall kill no flesh, and that the other persons before mentioned, doe not dresse any flesh in their houses in the Lent time, or other times prohibited, for any respect, nor suffer it to bee eaten contrary to Law. The like Recognizance with Sureties, shall be taken of like parties vpon like penalties, by such of the Iustices of Peace of Our Citie of Westminster, and the Liberties thereof, as wee shall thereunto specially appoint, and euery of the sayd Recognizances to be certified into Our Exchequer.

And for the Butchers, and others that come with Victuall or flesh out of the Countrey into the Citie, Our pleasure is, That the Lord Mayor shall cause certaine persons to watch at the Gates and other like places in the Suburbs, where flesh may be brought, to view & search, and to intercept the same: And if any of those watchmen shall be found negligent and corrupt in his Charge, then he to be committed to prison during the whole Lent.

And to the end that Fishermen may imploy themselves to Sea with better encouragement then heretofore, and that the Fishmongers may furnish themselves with such store from time to time hereafter, as shall be expedient, aswell for the prouision of the Citie, as for selling the same at reasonable rates, we will that they take notice of this Our commandement & constant resolution for obseruance of Lent, & Fish dayes, both now and hereafter, as by Law is required.

And furthermore, as we thinke it fit, that euery man should be a rule of order and abstinence in his owne house, aswel in respect of the publique, as of his priuate ease and benefit: So we straitly charge & command all Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Victuallers, Cookes, Alehouse-keepers, and Taverners, not to make any Supper for any person or persons whatsoeuer, vpon Friday nights, either in Lent or out of Lent, nor to suffer any meate to be then drested, bittered, sold, or eaten in their houses, vpon paine of such punishment, as is due to those that shall contemne Our Royall pleasure and Commandement.

And forasmuch as vpon further consideration had of this generall inconuenience, which too much liberty hath occasioned, wee conceiue, that the restraint of killing and dresting of flesh is no sufficient remedie alone for these mischiefes, vnlesse there be better care also taken to suppress the vnlawfull & inordinate eating of flesh in the time of Lent, and on other dayes and times prohibited, wherewith our Subjects haue accustomed themselves, rather for delicacie then for necessity. It is therefore our Royall will and pleasure, and accordingly, we doe hereby straitly prohibit and forbid all Our Subjects, of what degree or quality soeuer within this Realme, to eat any manner of flesh in the time of Lent, or on other dayes now vsually obserued as Fish dayes, without a special Licence first obtained from the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, in such manner and forme, as by the Act of Parliament made in the five and twentieth yeere of King Henry the eight is ordained, or from the Bishop of the Diocesse, or such other, as by the Law made in the first yeere of the reigne of Queene Elizabeth is set downe and declared, and for such causes as are there expressed, haue power to give Licences in that behalfe, and according to Our Lawes in that case provided, (which we will and command shall be sparingly granted, and in cases of necessity onely. And that such Licences and Dispensations bee not suffered to passe the Seale of the Archbishop or Bishop, vntill the Rate or Taxe by the sayd Statute payable to Us be duely answered to our Clerke of the Faculties, or to such person or persons as we vnder Our Primate Seale shall appoynt) vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and to be proceeded against, either according to Our Ecclesiasticall or Temporall Lawes, or by Our Attorney Generall in Our Court of Starre-chamber, as contemners of Our Royall Commandement, and wilfull neglectors of the common vtility of the Kingdome; And vpon such further penalties, as by the Lawes and Statutes of Our Realme may bee inflicted on those that shall wilfully offend in this kinde.

And as these Orders are to be executed in Our Citie of London, and places neere to the same, so it is Our expresse pleasure & Commandement, That Our Iustices of Peace in all Shires within their Rule, and all Mayors, Bailifes and chiefe Officers in Townes Corporate, or in any Liberties within their precincts, shall cause the same to be obserued & performed in like maner; and that no maner of Toleration, Fauour, or Conuincie be vled by any Iustice of Peace, or other Officer, contrary to the true meaning of this our Proclamation, as both they that shall presume wittingly so to tolerate the offence, as also the party himselfe offending, will answer the same at their bittermost perils; Our Commandement being, That Our Lawes in this case shall bee hereafter severely executed vpon all Offenders whatsoeuer:

Further charging and Commanding the Lord Mayor of Our Citie of London, the Iustices of Assise in their severall Circuits, the Mayors and chiefe Officers of all other Cities & Townes



Corporate, Iustices of Peace, Lords of Liberties, and all other Officers and Ministers within the severall Circuits and places of this Our Realme, that they and every of them in their owne persons, for example to others, fully obey this Our pleasure, and cause and compell the same to be obeyed and executed by others, as they will and were the contrary at their bittermost perils.

And for the due execution of the premises in all other the Counties, Cities and Towns corporate of this Our Realme, as well as in Our Cities of London and Westminster, we do hereby straitly charge and command, and declare Our Will and pleasure to be, that all Our Iustices of Peace within the same Counties, Cities and Townes corporate, as well within Liberties as without, or such, or so many of them as we shall thereunto specially appoint, if for Our better service, now or hereafter we shall see cause to appoint any, doe yeerely, and every yeere before Lent, cause to come and appeare before them all Inholders, Cookes, Tauerers, Alehouse-keepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers whatsoever, and to require and take of them to Our vse, severall Recognizances, with Sureties for obseruation of the premises, (viz.) The Principals in tenne pounds, and their two Sureties in five pounds a piece: And if they shall refuse or neglect to enter into such Recognizances, then the Iustices of Peace of that Countie, Citie, Towne corporate, or Liberty, shall suppress such persons so refusing, from victualling any more, and shall also cause them forthwith to become bound by Recognizances with Sureties to Our vse, (viz.) The Principals in twenty pounds, and their two Sureties in tenne pounds a piece, not to victuall, or sell Beere or Ale from thenceforth; which if they shall refuse to doe, then the said Iustices to commit to prison all such persons so refusing to enter into such Recognizances, until they shall submit themselves, and become bound as aforesaid. And further, that all such Inholders, Cookes, Tauerers, Alehouse-keepers, Butchers, and other Victuallers, as shall not appeare before the said Iustices, as aforesaid, That they may immediately send forth their warrants, to grant Proesse against them, and every of them so making default, to appeare and answer their contempt, at the next generall Sessions of the Peace.

And further, for the more due punishment of Inholders, keepers of Ordinary tables, Cookes, Butchers, Victuallers, Alehouse-keepers, Tauerers, and such like, who shall forfeit their Recognizances by killing or dressing of Flesh, or suffering it to bee eaten in their houses in the Lent time, and other Fish-daves; And to the end that the same may be as well taken in due forme of Law, as duely certified into Our Exchequer, we do will and require the Lord Maior of London, and all Iustices of Peace, as well within Liberties as without, respectively, or such of them as we shall thereunto specially appoint, as aforesaid, That at such times as they shall meete within their severall Precincts or Divisions, for the taking of such Recognizances, they give notice to the Clerkes of the Peace, or their Deputies, or such other Clerkes or their deputies, as we shall thereunto specially appoint, if we shall appoint any, to attend them for that purpose; Of whom we will require a strict accompt for the legall taking and returning of the same Recognizances into Our said Exchequer; The said Clerkes of the Peace and their Deputies, or other Clerkes and their Deputies, so to be employed by Our appointment, as aforesaid, taking for the making and certifying of the same Recognizances of all Inkeepers, Tauerers, Cookes, and Butchers, the Fee of two shillings six pence; and of all Alehouse-keepers the Fee of twelve pence, as hath been heretofore limited to be taken by the Clerkes of the Peace of the severall Counties, in like cases for every such Recognizance, and no more.

And lastly, for that the Fishmongers (vpon the obseruation of the aforesaid Orders) may perhaps take occasion thereby to inhance the prices, as well of Fresh, as of Sea Fish, we doe therefore hereby further charge and command all Fishmongers whatsoever, That they sell and utter their Fish at moderate and vsuall rates and prices; And that all Iustices of Peace, Maiors, Bailiffes, and other Our Officers, as well within Liberties as without, to whom it shall appertain, shall from time to time take such order with the said Fishmongers, that Our Subjects bee not grieved by any such inhancement or increas of prices, vpon paine of Our high displeasure, and such further punishment as may be inflicted vpon them by Our Lawes.

Giuen at Our Court at Whitehall, the fourth day of February, in the third yeere of Our Reigne of Great Britaine, France, and Ireland.

God saue the King.

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to the Kings most Excellent Maiestie.  
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